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## BOOK REVIEWS.

*The Tree Dwellers.* By KATHARINE E. DOPP, the University of Chicago, Extension Department. Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co., 1903. Pp. 158.

THE best interpretation of this book must be read in the author's preface and the twenty-six pages of "Suggestions to Teachers" at the end of the book. These pages embody a message to the elementary teacher destined to be far-reaching in results. It is a message that *will be* heard and gradually heeded. The best time for all of us to hear and to heed is now. The means are at hand. *The Tree Dwellers* is not quite the first voicing of the author's message, but is, if we mistake not, the first of a series that is to be.

*The Tree Dwellers* is a study, or a series of studies, of the "long ago" turned into child's literature in a series of thirty-three stories, making 130 pages of reading matter. Its place as literature is with Waterloo's *Story of Ab*, Jack London's *The Call of the Wild*, Seton's *Lobo*, *Rag and Vixen*, and Kipling's *Jungle Books*. It is the story of the "wild" itself, peopled by wild men and wild animals. It is the story of man without fire, clothing, and shelter. It is not a *Robinson Crusoe's* make-believe primitive condition of man, but the real story of the real primitive man. Hence this book is no myth, no legend, no fable. Romance, maybe, but authentic. The author is a University of Chicago Ph.D., which means, according to Dr. Harper, that she has done original work.

These stories are written, so the author tells us, for the child six and one-half and seven years of age (we wonder if Dr. Dewey will permit it to be read till the next year). We know one boy, eight years old, who has read the book with absorbing interest. He had read it sooner, had it been published in season. This boy now understands the "call of the wild" as he could not before. He has lived the life with the "wild" for his environment in the *Tree Dwellers*.

Frederick Harrison, in *Meaning of History*, cites as the first teachers of the human race the men who first clothed themselves, provided shelter for their offspring, separated themselves from the herd, and ceased to be filthy. The teaching these men did touches our civilization of today at every point. But what concerns us here is that it was for the child the first shelter was provided, that it was for the child the first step toward civilization was taken. The link that binds the childhood of today with the age of primitive man need not be far to seek.

"The Industrial and Social History Series" by the author, Dr. Dopp, will tell in language that the children can read, when they have learned to read, by learning how to read, the story of primitive man. Why the series is "industrial" the author's message makes perfectly clear. Profane hands can only mar the message. One who has seen a child grow up in a sand pile will readily understand. The "Things to Do" in connection with each story in the *Tree Dwellers* amply justify this part of the title. The "social" has been hinted at. The child in reading the story lives the life. ALBERT R. SABIN.

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